

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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 IN RE: :
 :
 THE FIRE THAT OCCURRED ON : NTSB Accident No.
 THE CARIBBEAN FANTASY THAT : DCA16FM052
 OCCURRED ON AUGUST 17, 2016 :
 :
 -----:

INTERVIEW OF: PAVOL SLADKOVIC

Monday,
August 20, 2016

Engineering Building
Sector San Juan

BEFORE:

CDR [REDACTED], USCG
 LTJG [REDACTED], USCG
 JIM GALLETTE, USCG
 ADAM TUCKER, NTSB

## APPEARANCES:

On Behalf of the P&I Club:

MANOLO T. RODRIGUEZ-BIRD, ESQ.  
JOSE RAMON RIVERA-MORALES, ESQ.  
Jimenez, Graffam & Lausell  
420 Ponce De Leon Avenue  
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00918  
(787)767-1030 (Rodriguez-Bird)  
mrodriguez@jgl.com  
rrivera@jgl.com

On Behalf of Mid Ocean and the Interviewee:

JONATHAN DUNLEAVY, ESQ.  
Hamilton Miller & Birthisel  
150 S.E. Second Avenue  
Suite 1200  
Miami, Florida 33131  
305-379-3686  
jdunleavy@hamiltonmillerlaw.com

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

1:25 p.m.

1  
2  
3 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay, matter under  
4 investigation is the fire on board the Carribean  
5 Fantasy that occurred on Wednesday, the 17th of August,  
6 2016. This is the interview of Pavol Sladkovic.

7 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Sladkovic.

8 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Sladkovic, okay.  
9 Today's date is the 20th of August, 2016. The current  
10 time is 1:25 afternoon, it's 1:00 p.m. Okay, location  
11 is the Coast Guard sector San Juan Engineering  
12 Building. This interview is being conducted by myself,  
13 I am Lieutenant Junior Grade [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

14 What I'd like right now is for everyone  
15 that's sitting at the table, if you could state your  
16 name and your title, what you're doing here.

17 CDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Good afternoon. This  
18 is Commander [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with the U.S. Coast Guard,  
19 the lead investigator.

20 JIM GALLETTE: Good afternoon, Jim Gallette,  
21 Investigations National Center of Expertise.

22 ADAM TUCKER: Adam Tucker with the National  
23 Transportation Safety Board.

24 MANOLO T. RODRIGUEZ-BIRD: Good afternoon.  
25 Manolo Rodriguez-Bird for P&I Club.

1 JONATHAN DUNLEAVY: Jonathan Dunleavy from  
2 the law firm of Hamilton Miller & Birthisel on behalf  
3 of Mid Ocean and Mr. Sladkovic.

4 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Pavol Sladkovic, Third  
5 Engineer of Caribbean Fantasy vessel.

6 LTJG [REDACTED]: Perfect, thank you.  
7 Could you verify your date of birth for me?

8 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: 22nd, December, 1982.

9 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay, thank you for  
10 that. So, I'd like to start off with just some general  
11 background information on you.

12 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Okay.

13 LTJG [REDACTED]: How long have you  
14 worked for this company?

15 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I've worked for this  
16 company approximately six weeks.

17 LTJG [REDACTED]: Six weeks, okay.  
18 And for the duration of the six weeks, have you always  
19 been the Third Engineer?

20 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, I have been always  
21 Third Engineer.

22 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. And before  
23 this company where did you used to work?

24 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I worked for a company  
25 called MST Germany. This company was operating bulker

1 carriers.

2 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. For more or  
3 less how long?

4 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: For approximately  
5 (unintelligible) four months Third Engineer and then  
6 before 11 months Engine Cadet.

7 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Four months as a  
8 Third?

9 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes.

10 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay, and 11 months  
11 as a cadet?

12 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: As a cadet.

13 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. Do you have  
14 any other experience as an engineer?

15 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Not in maritime in this,  
16 constructual engineer.

17 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. If you  
18 could, let me just talk about the events that happened  
19 on the day of the fire on the 17th, if you could just  
20 start from when you started your watch, all the way  
21 until you got off the vessel. Take your time, any  
22 detail that you remember -- I'm going to let you speak,  
23 I'll try not to interrupt, anything that you remember  
24 from start to finish on this day.

25 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Okay, so I started my

1 watch like usually at 4 o'clock morning and I went to  
2 Engineering Room, I changed Second Engineer almost  
3 already finishing his watch. Also, my (unintelligible)  
4 came and we started this normal, daily routine, the  
5 jobs like the round-to-round checks of all  
6 (unintelligible) were cleaning filters, also checking  
7 machinery, and this we were doing until 5 o'clock. At  
8 5 o'clock we received a call from bridge to our notice  
9 before arrival. At this time I prepared  
10 (unintelligible) special checklist for every arrival  
11 and departure which has to be filled.

12 In accordance with this checklist I started  
13 checking the machinery and preparing all necessary  
14 things for arrival. After our review I received a one-  
15 hour notice to arrival from bridge, this was for me to  
16 call Chief Engineer and also Chief Electrician to  
17 proceed to engineer room. We prepared a third  
18 generator before starting, together with  
19 (unintelligible) we started this generator because  
20 arrival for all three generator has to be operated. I  
21 think around, then minutes later Chief Engineer came  
22 from Engineer Room and we worked together  
23 (unintelligible). When I returned I took a round-to-  
24 round check if all machinery, everything is okay. I  
25 took care especially for three generator because when I

1 started something, it has to be adjusted like cooling  
2 water, temperature and such things. When I was  
3 returning to Engine Control Room I met motorman, his  
4 name is Benny, he told me that we have fuel leakage  
5 from main engine. So I told him to show me where the  
6 leakage. He started walking to Engineer Room down the  
7 stairs between engines. When I followed him I saw a  
8 big spilling from fuel on manifold, which was on the  
9 right side of this port-side engine, this fuel was  
10 spilling also on turbo charger and manifold, it was  
11 really big spill.

12 So, at the time I started running back to  
13 Engineer Room to shut the fuel, shut the engine. This  
14 motorman started following me, I just heard like some  
15 puffs, something, this was open explosion on this  
16 operating gases from diesel. He started also  
17 screaming, "Stop engine. Stop engine." I just look in  
18 front of we have small window in Engine Control Room.  
19 It's not clear window because it had some  
20 (unintelligible) or something on it, I just saw all  
21 around this little fire. I immediately stopped both  
22 main engines. At that time I called bridge that we  
23 have fire in Engine Room, port-side engine is burning,  
24 I stopped fuel booster (unintelligible).

25 Between this time, also, Chief Engineer came

1 to Engineer Room, he started operating  
2 (unintelligible), there is this extinguishing system  
3 which is the control panel for this Engine Room, all  
4 these rooms are divided in section, it started  
5 operating on -- it was not possible to use small fire  
6 extinguisher or something like this, because even when  
7 I entered the Control Room, after me this motorman  
8 entered, and after Chief Engineer can be  
9 (unintelligible), maybe I think of 10-15 seconds. One  
10 of them screamed, "You are missing (unintelligible)."  
11 I just turned back and I saw only motorman and Chief  
12 Engineer, so first thing I did, after I did this, after  
13 I stopped engine, stopped fuel, report the fire to the  
14 bridge, I wanted to walk outside the Engine Control  
15 Room and check where is (unintelligible), where it's  
16 missing.

17           So, I just opened the lowers, but during  
18 this 10-15 seconds I just big, black wall of smoke in  
19 front of me. So, I closed the doors immediately, and  
20 then (unintelligible) I don't know how long it take, I  
21 tried to do it and take a deep breath of fresh air,  
22 tried enter, I was holding the doors and screaming,  
23 "(unintelligible)" if this man is somewhere on the  
24 floor, if he still can hear me just to tell me. I  
25 tried to pull him back to Engine Room. Nothing worked,



1 I didn't hear any (unintelligible) from him. I went  
2 back to Engine Control Room, motorman was still there,  
3 he was safe, Chief Engineer was already operating this  
4 extinguishing system because in this situation we were  
5 already unable to exit Engine Control Room, it was not  
6 possible to do some small fire extinguisher or  
7 something because we didn't have any briefing operators  
8 or anything like this.

9           After this I tried to maybe one, two, three  
10 times take a deep breath, go inside Engine Room with  
11 closed eyes and screaming, "(unintelligible)." If I  
12 don't get any response from this man, I didn't hear  
13 anything from him. This corridor between Engine  
14 Control Room and Engine Room started filling with these  
15 toxic gases and what I remember the Chief Engineer was  
16 already operating this extinguishing system, he was  
17 communicating through radio with the bridge and I  
18 wasn't focused on what is he talking about. I was  
19 trying to find this missing person. Then I just  
20 remember when already these toxic gases came into  
21 Engine Control Room, that he ordered to leave this  
22 Engine Control Room, evacuation of Control Room.

23           So, I remember the First Engineer and  
24 motorman, they left, like at first I was following  
25 them, there was already a lot of smoke in this corridor

1 and these stairs. Then I remembered that, I don't know  
2 if I slipped or I became unconscious for a few seconds,  
3 but I falled on the stairs and when I lift my head  
4 again, I saw that they are somewhere up near the exit  
5 and this staircase is full of smoke. So I just take a  
6 breath on these toxic gases, I tried to run as much as  
7 possible to get as close to the exit, and I got by the  
8 doors on the right side to the garage, which was one  
9 for lower in this exit.

10 So, I entered this garage and there when I  
11 finally take a deep breath of fresh air, I saw this  
12 (unintelligible), he was standing in front of me, this  
13 was really luck for me. I saw also a fire team was  
14 preparing the equipment, everything, so I just scream  
15 on them, Engine Control Room was fully evacuated  
16 because they wanted to really see O2 systems, so this  
17 was really important information for them.

18 From the beginning of fire until we get to  
19 Engine Room, we were unable to go back to Engine Room  
20 and do something, in like 10-15 seconds it was like  
21 massive, open explosion. This Engine Room filled with  
22 gases, it was very fast. Then when I came outside to  
23 this garage, people helped me to sit because I was  
24 already poisoned already this carbon monoxide. I felt  
25 that I was unable to stand until I get better, then I

1 started remember -- they moved me on a top floor on the  
2 vessel and on the fresh air they gave me also oxygen.  
3 I was waiting for this (unintelligible).

4 LTJG [REDACTED]: Then what happened  
5 after you were up on the, waiting for disembarkation?

6 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: At first I didn't feel  
7 very good, they told me in hospital that this is  
8 normal, the person which is poisoned by carbon monoxide  
9 don't feel anything, but after few tens of minutes  
10 maybe I would start feeling weak and dizzy like this.  
11 This was happening to me, because when I came on board  
12 at first I was also helping this other crew to giving  
13 life jackets to (unintelligible). I was helping them  
14 to -- I was cooperating. Then they took me to  
15 starboard side, it was for the disembarkation, they  
16 gave me oxygen, then I told already I felt  
17 (unintelligible), so I lied on the floor and waiting.  
18 I remember they started evacuating the engine side  
19 first, then crew, and then officers.

20 I went on one of this Coast Guard rescue  
21 boats. They transferred us to on the rescue boat, then  
22 on the shore, then on this emergency took us to  
23 hospital. (Unintelligible), his name is [REDACTED], I  
24 don't know the surname, Chief Engineer, they took us on  
25 this block, they said that we were highly intoxicated

1 by carbon monoxide, so they called us to the  
2 compression chamber for a few hours, then I was moved  
3 to hotel. Now Chief Engineer went again to hospital  
4 because he had some respiration problems.

5 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay, thank you for  
6 that. You covered a lot.

7 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, during this time the  
8 Chief Engineer was trying to extinguish this fire when  
9 I was trying to find this (unintelligible). I don't  
10 know how much time, I know that this was happening  
11 during this time.

12 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. I have some  
13 follow-up questions for you. What I'm going to try to  
14 do is break it down I guess by systems. The first part  
15 that I'd like to talk about is the Engine Room. Do you  
16 want to talk about maintenance and your position and  
17 the Watch Quarter Station Bill, but I'll start with the  
18 actual incident and some of the things that you had  
19 discussed that had happened that I'm not clear on,  
20 okay.

21 So at 0400 you started watch which you  
22 relieve the Second Engineer. Your watch was from 4:00  
23 to 8:00. You made your rounds and everything was fine  
24 during the rounds.

25 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: So, approximately every

1 20-30 minutes just my watch (unintelligible).

2 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Twenty, 30 minutes  
3 is a round?

4 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, approximately this  
5 time. Because I need to check also parameters in  
6 Engine Control Room and (unintelligible).

7 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay.

8 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Also my motorman these  
9 people are like my eyes in Engine Room, and we are  
10 doing this together, everything.

11 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. How often do  
12 they make their rounds?

13 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I think it's around also  
14 10-15 minutes, because we've got some jobs to be done  
15 like refilling service tanks with fuel or refilling  
16 boilers, so when they go to do something also check the  
17 machinery.

18 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay.

19 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: On doing their watch they  
20 also need to clean the fuel filters and these people  
21 representing machinery.

22 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. In your  
23 rounds specifically, do you walk every single deck in  
24 the engine space, do you walk every --?

25 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, just general between,

1 I check CPP Room, check engines, purifiers, and also  
2 generators.

3 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. Prior to  
4 this incident did you notice anything?

5 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: All night we didn't  
6 observe any (unintelligible). It was in the end of  
7 fuel manifold there is some (unintelligible) or some  
8 inspection cover, and then I think there was  
9 (unintelligible) and started spilling.

10 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. How many  
11 engines are in the Engine Room?

12 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Two main engines, three  
13 generators. There is one also emergency compressor  
14 which runs on diesel fuel.

15 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. At the time  
16 of the fire, how many engines were operating?

17 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Two engines were still  
18 operating, we were preparing for maneuvers. With my  
19 experience, this is first time I had engine which had  
20 fuel system on the same side where is also exhaust  
21 manifold.

22 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

23 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Because sometimes it  
24 happened that some fuel you start leaking, but always  
25 my past experience this fuel manifold was on the other

1 side (unintelligible) which is only around 35-40  
2 degrees, so when it's happening to start leaking. I  
3 cannot imagine what will happen if this engine was  
4 running on UMS machinery space, there are no people  
5 inside, it will be much worse.

6 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

7 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: This thing, this fire  
8 happened very quick. I said it was maybe a few  
9 seconds, but if nobody's inside, (unintelligible).

10 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. What's the  
11 normal compliment of the engineering space? So, you  
12 have the engineering of the watch and do you have --?

13 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Two motormen, two this  
14 supporting us.

15 LTJG [REDACTED]: So, there's  
16 normally three in the Engine Room?

17 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, normally, but at the  
18 time already Chief Engineer came because we were  
19 preparing for maneuvers. When I received, for example,  
20 two hours advance, usually we were arriving 7 o'clock,  
21 so at first the bridge called me two hours that wanted  
22 me at 5 o'clock and one hour advance, that's six. At  
23 that time I'm supposed to call Chief Electrician and  
24 Chief Engineer.

25 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

1 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: So, Chief Engineer already  
2 came and I think also Chief Electrician also this way.

3 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. Are you  
4 aware of what time the fire started?

5 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I don't know. I think it  
6 was around 5-10 minutes after I started this third  
7 generator, it should be returning engine lock when  
8 engineering tour started. I wasn't watching, I was  
9 focused on this stop engine and this thing.

10 LTJG [REDACTED]: Completely  
11 understand. Yes, that's --

12 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: They will tell you exact  
13 time, maybe from the bridge, because they received my  
14 call immediately.

15 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. So at 6  
16 o'clock you called chief, which is a hour before?

17 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I think it was 6:00 or  
18 6:30, I don't know what time was the arrival. If it  
19 was 7:30, that means 6:30 I call him.

20 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay, so 6:30 --?

21 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I don't remember, because  
22 I think in Dominican Republic we have arrival 7:00 and  
23 here is 7:30. I don't remember. There should be  
24 checklist, this.

25 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay, that's fine.



1 So, is there a certain amount of time that he takes or  
2 that you guys have as far as your procedures, how long  
3 for him to get down into this space after you call?

4 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: It's around ten minutes.

5 LTJG [REDACTED]: Around ten minutes?

6 So, let's just say that at 6:30 you called.

7 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, around 6:45 he was  
8 there.

9 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. You said the  
10 Chief AC and the Electrician come down as well? I'm  
11 sorry; was it just electrician that also comes?

12 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, I didn't call. I see  
13 the time and they didn't come, they weren't already in  
14 Engine Room. Only I, Chief Engineer and this motorman  
15 and (unintelligible), four persons.

16 LTJG [REDACTED]: Four persons, okay.

17 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I think this Chief  
18 Electrician was on his way already.

19 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. Do you know  
20 if he ever made it into this space?

21 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, I didn't see him  
22 during the fire and even when it was only Chief  
23 Engineer, because I think Chief Engineer came a bit  
24 early.

25 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. You said the

1 motorman and the wiper, they were cleaning fuel  
2 filters, where are those fuel filters?

3 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Like, where were they  
4 cleaning?

5 LTJG [REDACTED]: The ones that they  
6 were cleaning in relation to the fire?

7 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I'm not sure if they were  
8 doing this during fire, but I said that this is  
9 (unintelligible), so every watch day they take some  
10 filters from fuel this booster supply (unintelligible)  
11 and they need to clean them. I don't know if they were  
12 cleaning them at that time.

13 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

14 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: But I think before  
15 (unintelligible) now because I already told him a few  
16 times to prepare and standby because I am calling them  
17 and I'm giving them orders.

18 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. So, the  
19 location, though, of the fuel filter, you said that it  
20 was booster?

21 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: They were not near this  
22 engine here, the refueling for this, they were no near  
23 the main engine, they were opposite side on the system  
24 with the pumps and everything.

25 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

1 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Between this two engines,  
2 there were nothing.

3 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay, thank you.  
4 During your watch are you aware if you guys change from  
5 high sulpher to low sulpher?

6 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: We don't change high and  
7 low, only for heavy fuel and diesel.

8 LTJG [REDACTED]: Heavy fuel and  
9 diesel. Do you know what the engine was currently  
10 burning?

11 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: It was burning diesel. I  
12 think this was one of the problems because it's higher  
13 combustible and much more easy for ignition of diesel,  
14 and also it was spraying more because lower viscosity.

15 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

16 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: And this change is  
17 happening between 12:00 and 4 o'clock morning, shift  
18 before me is changing always.

19 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. As part of  
20 your rounds you look at the different gauges that you  
21 have inside the engine control space.

22 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes.

23 LTJG [REDACTED]: Did you notice any  
24 temperatures that was different from normal operation?

25 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, temperatures were

1 okay. (Unintelligible) 72 and 75. It's also my job to  
2 keep this, I am adjusting this three-way well which  
3 controls cooling. Also, (unintelligible) starboard  
4 around 49 degrees, port side 44-45 degrees, so  
5 temperature was fine. This fuel pressure was around 4  
6 bars.

7 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: About 4 bars is the  
8 pressure? Okay. You had mentioned that -- I'm sorry;  
9 I'm going to jump a little bit out of order. You had  
10 said something about the Emergency Control Room, that  
11 you were looking at a screen and you saw fire/smoke on  
12 the screen?

13 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Not on the screen, but we  
14 have a window to the Engine Room.

15 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Oh, you were  
16 looking outside?

17 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, but this window is  
18 not clear like this. It has some special window, so  
19 you can see all the new shades of persons or something,  
20 and I saw flame all around this window.

21 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. Does the  
22 Engine Room have any cameras?

23 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, we don't -- maybe they  
24 have on the bridge, but not in Engine Room we don't  
25 have a look.

1 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: There's no cameras  
2 monitoring?

3 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, I don't have anything  
4 on the monitor. Maybe before on vessels, sometimes  
5 they had camera, but on the bridge only. But this is I  
6 think only to Engine Rooms which are running under UMS,  
7 unattended machinery space.

8 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: That would make  
9 sense.

10 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: They have cameras.

11 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay, thank you.  
12 I'll try to get back to -- you make preps in the space.  
13 You went to #3 generator, you energized #3?

14 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I was checking all  
15 generators because when you start another generator,  
16 checking water, temperature, it will be higher, you  
17 need to adjust. Always when some machinery is changing  
18 parameters, observing what's going on.

19 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. Then after  
20 you did that, you went back into Engine Control Room?

21 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I was on my way back to  
22 Engine Control Room and I don't remember if  
23 before/after Engine Control I met this motorman who  
24 report the leakage of fuel from Engine Room.

25 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay, perfect. So

1 he made the report to you, you don't recall the  
2 location which is fine.

3 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: He didn't tell me exactly  
4 where, so I told him take me to the place and I'd like  
5 to see.

6 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. You went  
7 straight to the place, was there anybody else with you?

8 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I went there to the place  
9 and I saw already Chief Engineer there and I started  
10 moving also motorman, also Chief Engineer, because in  
11 the moment it become really heavy.

12 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

13 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: In that moment when we  
14 came, I just stood on stairs, I didn't even come  
15 through the plane, because when I saw that it really  
16 spilled really fast and I turned, I knew we need to do  
17 something with this, and I went back to stop engines  
18 and stopped the pumps, immediately I started proceeding  
19 back to Engine Room.

20 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

21 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: And Engine Control Room.

22 LTJG [REDACTED]: Do you recall when  
23 Chief came?

24 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: During that time when I  
25 was stopping main engine, he immediately started

1 following us.

2 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. So, for  
3 clarification -- I'm sorry; I'm not following. So,  
4 after you turn on, checked #3 generator and got it  
5 ready to go, you started to walk towards the Emergency  
6 Control Room, the ECR?

7 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Engine Control Room.

8 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Engine Control  
9 Room, I'm sorry. Motorman reports to you.

10 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes.

11 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Was Chief in the  
12 space yet?

13 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: He just told me that we  
14 had -- he was present in Engine Room.

15 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: The Chief was in  
16 the Engine Room. Do you recall if he was in the Engine  
17 Control Room or was he already investigating what --?

18 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: At that time he went down,  
19 I didn't see him, but I think at that time he went down  
20 to check this leakage. Then I followed him with  
21 motorman and I was lost, but when we were together  
22 motorman was in front of me walking down, so they  
23 started (unintelligible). At that time I turned  
24 motorman to him, and Chief Engineer turned also back to  
25 Engine Room.

1 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. All right,  
2 so --

3 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, it was why date was  
4 like this.

5 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Yes, and that's  
6 fine. Again, so I'm asking fine details just because  
7 I'm trying to figure out what everybody was doing, but  
8 it's okay --

9 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I think Chief Engineer  
10 already started running behind us, because when I came,  
11 I said immediately, I pulled both levers to stop the  
12 engine, I started calling. At that time behind me was  
13 already motorman and at that time even Chief Engineer  
14 came into Engine Room. That means he was following us  
15 immediately.

16 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay, so you get  
17 notification from the motorman, Chief is already  
18 investigating --?

19 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: He didn't tell me this, I  
20 just saw him when I was on my way to this place of  
21 spill, he was there already.

22 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay, so you get to  
23 the place that it spilled and then did something  
24 rupture and it all of a sudden became a large spill or  
25 just once you saw the spill --?



1 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, once I saw, it became  
2 fast.

3 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Oh, okay. So,  
4 right when you got there, that's when it was gushing  
5 out?

6 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, so we turned  
7 together. I'm sure if it was like this big one, even  
8 motorman he would stop the main engine on this, even he  
9 knew what to do.

10 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay.

11 PARTICIPANT: Just so you know, Pavol, make  
12 sure only one voice at a time, because when they try to  
13 take that dictation off you, you guys are talking at  
14 the same time, (unintelligible).

15 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Okay.

16 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Thank you.

17 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Okay.

18 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: I will keep my  
19 mouth shut when you're talking.

20 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Me also.

21 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: No, you're fine.  
22 It's my fault, I apologize for that. Where were we?  
23 You saw the big rupture and everybody started running  
24 to Emergency Control Room?

25 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes.

1 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. At Emergency  
2 Control Room the actions that you took you brought down  
3 the engine, so they were a clutch ahead?

4 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, at first I brought  
5 down the engine. That was what I did.

6 LTJG [REDACTED]: So, bringing down  
7 the engines, did you stop them or you just put them in  
8 neutral?

9 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I stopped engines, stopped  
10 the fuel pumps, everything, because when there is  
11 leakage like this, it's very dangerous, so I stopped  
12 the engine.

13 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. Is there any  
14 fuel stops?

15 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I stopped the engine, I  
16 pulled down the levers, then I took phone immediately  
17 starting calling and I stopped the booster and supply  
18 on diesel pump. I stopped both fuel pumps at that  
19 time.

20 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. So, the  
21 pumps are secure. Are there any valves that need to be  
22 secure or if the pump is secure, then --?

23 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, we cannot do anything  
24 from Engineer Room. As I said, when Chief Engineer  
25 arrived and I tried to looking for this wiper, I was

1 unable to exit. Of course on every engine there is  
2 some valve for open and this charge something like  
3 this, but it was not possible this fuel manifold they  
4 have enough fuel to run engine for few minutes, even  
5 one hour, so even if I call this valve, in this fuel  
6 manifold there is still a lot of fuel.

7 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. For the fuel  
8 manifold, in the area that you saw, was it a pipe, was  
9 it a hose, was it a plate?

10 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, it's a pipe. In the  
11 end of pipe there is a flange, this one is also  
12 collecting inspection cover, you can open and you can  
13 see what's inside manifold. And there is a gasket, of  
14 course, pipe connection flange, and this gasket I think  
15 it's broken. I was just standing on the stairs, I  
16 didn't see it was fire, I had no reason to continue  
17 because I saw this really massive (unintelligible), so  
18 I started returning, so I think that gasket inside  
19 (unintelligible), it will adjust outside and through  
20 this 2-3 millimeters gap stop, this fuel under pressure  
21 of approximately 4 bars leaking and spilling on turbo  
22 charge.

23 LTJG [REDACTED]: You saw it spray on  
24 the turbo charger?

25 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: It started spraying this

1 way where exhaust manifold and where it was this cover  
2 there was also turbo charge, so we started spraying --  
3 as I said, I wasn't as close, I just know that it  
4 doesn't matter if it's turbo charge or manifold, this  
5 exhaust manifold is around 300 degrees.

6 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. Okay, so I'm  
7 going to get a little organized here, sorry. Pulled  
8 the fuel stop from the booster, you stopped the engine.  
9 You said Chief was in the space, the motorman was in  
10 the space and you were in the space. You said Chief  
11 was --?

12 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: He was operating, he was  
13 turned back, because I was standing in the front of  
14 this control of engine. He immediately ran to operate  
15 this extinguishing system and he was turning, so he was  
16 starting, he started this fire extinguishing system.

17 LTJG [REDACTED]: What exactly is  
18 that?

19 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: That's like this water  
20 mist system, all this engine room, all the parts are  
21 divided into sections and wherever, for example,  
22 starboard, port side engine, wherever gets the fire you  
23 can spray this water mist. It's not like water flow,  
24 but water mist because of this electricity.

25 LTJG [REDACTED]: Is this water mist

1 system, are there buttons in the --?

2 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, there are buttons.

3 You can see where it has sections or these sections you  
4 push button and if you just start spraying

5 (unintelligible).

6 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

7 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: And then this motorman he  
8 was standing behind my back, somehow he  
9 (unintelligible), so I didn't pay attention on him, I  
10 didn't focus on him, I was trying to find this missing  
11 wiper.

12 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay, that's fine.

13 The buttons for the water mist system, are they  
14 labeled?

15 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: What?

16 LTJG [REDACTED]: The buttons that  
17 you said for the water mist system, do they have a  
18 label?

19 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, they have all of  
20 them.

21 LTJG [REDACTED]: How are they  
22 labeled?

23 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I think there is section  
24 name, section numbers, also the location where is it.  
25 I'm not sure about it, but I think there's details like

1 main engine, port side, starboard, things like this.

2 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

3 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Also, I'm sure because I  
4 was checking this before because I had to know this  
5 also, there is also small instruction like how to  
6 operate, what to start and everything.

7 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. Did you see  
8 it operate?

9 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I didn't see how we're  
10 operating, I just saw that the system was put online.  
11 I saw this even standing with my back. I don't know;  
12 can I draw it?

13 LTJG [REDACTED]: Of course, please.

14 PARTICIPANT: That'll be much easier.

15 LTJG [REDACTED]: Yes.

16 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: This is outside this  
17 Engine Control Room. Here is Control Room, here are  
18 two levers from main engine. I was standing here, and  
19 here is that control box from this fire extinguisher.  
20 So Chief Engineer was standing like this, so I did not  
21 see through him what is he doing this, you have to ask  
22 him.

23 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

24 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I was just standing here  
25 and here is the window, somewhere here was the turbo

1 charger and I saw through this window that fire was  
2 maybe this big.

3 LTJG [REDACTED]: Wow, okay.

4 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Because I saw it through  
5 this. When I was standing here I saw this window is  
6 full of fire.

7 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. So you saw  
8 Chief standing by the station for the mist?

9 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, he was operating  
10 this.

11 LTJG [REDACTED]: But you can't  
12 confirm that he did operate it or that he was just  
13 standing there like he was getting ready to get it  
14 online?

15 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I saw that these buttons  
16 from these sections were turned right, that means --

17 LTJG [REDACTED]: The systems online?

18 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I didn't know which one  
19 because I was standing here, I was unable to read. He  
20 was operating this, so I focused on trying to find an  
21 escape and save these wipers.

22 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

23 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: It was at that time I  
24 remember operating and also sending instructions by  
25 radio to the bridge what's going on, what are we doing

1 and all of this. Also, I didn't catch what is he talk  
2 -- the last thing I remember was coming to evacuate the  
3 Engine Room.

4 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: The Chief gave that  
5 command?

6 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, when the Engine  
7 Control Room was starting filling with toxic gases, so  
8 at that time (unintelligible).

9 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. Could you  
10 see water or mist falling?

11 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No. I told you we have  
12 some special --

13 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Glass?

14 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, you can see only some  
15 lights and shades and like this.

16 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay, do you hear  
17 like if the system -- I don't know if it makes noises,  
18 but --?

19 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, the Engine Room was  
20 full of noise, so I was unable to recognize this.

21 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. Is there an  
22 escape inside ECR?

23 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Only this was the escape.  
24 Here's some small, here are the doors, this is our  
25 exchange room, we have some cabins to put our



1 (unintelligible). Here are the stairs. So, here are  
2 the doors to Engine Room, I don't know which side they  
3 open, this side or other side. Here are the doors and  
4 here are also this side, I just need to put this out  
5 the doors to Engine Room. This side it was impossible  
6 because it was full of fire, we were unable to go  
7 anywhere to start extinguishing this fire. This side I  
8 was just trying to open these doors, take a breath, and  
9 I was holding one hand this corner over doors and  
10 trying to get inside as far as possible just to Engine  
11 Room, I was screaming at this wiper.

12 Then I was returning, I did maybe this two  
13 or three times, and already this corridor and  
14 everything starting filling with gases and we have  
15 nothing to do without any equipment.

16 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

17 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Here I remember I just,  
18 here I fell down, and then I look up and saw some exit  
19 doors also, and I saw I think one person that was  
20 already full of smoke, also, so I saw one man is  
21 already escaping this Chief Engineer and motorman. I  
22 just took a breath of these toxic gases, running how  
23 much I could, I escape this area to lower garage. So I  
24 escape this way and I find here was already motorman,  
25 and he escaped this other side, we have this water-

1 tight doors and he was parked around this fire and he  
2 escaped through here.

3 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay.

4 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: He's lucky that these  
5 doors right here.

6 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay.

7 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: But the fire was on this  
8 side of Engine Room, and as I said when I hear my  
9 motorman and Chief Engineer, I already tried to open  
10 this door and even on this side it was full of smoke.  
11 I didn't see (unintelligible) on this railing, I didn't  
12 see railing, I didn't see nothing.

13 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: For your  
14 visibility, how would you describe as far as distance,  
15 how far could you see?

16 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Maybe 30 centimeters.  
17 It's like I don't know how many feet is like this.

18 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay.

19 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I just opened the door and  
20 I saw big black wall in front of me.

21 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay.

22 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Then didn't open motor  
23 because every time I open this, smoke and things I saw.

24 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Was there anybody  
25 else inside the Engine Control Room?

1 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I know only me, this  
2 wiper, motorman and Chief Engineer.

3 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. And who was  
4 the last one to leave the engine space?

5 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I was maybe last time.  
6 The first two were Chief Engineer -- I was still here,  
7 Chief Engineer took log book, as I remember. They  
8 started walking, motorman and I was following them.  
9 Then he was screaming my name, and I'm replying I'm  
10 okay, but I was following them on the stairs. Then I  
11 slip, and I wasn't sure if I can (unintelligible), so I  
12 exit as fast as possible.

13 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

14 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: This wiper I don't know  
15 when he made it out, so (unintelligible).

16 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. Thank you  
17 for that. Let me make sure if I have anything.

18 Okay. You're out of the engine space. I'd  
19 like to talk, before I get into your actions after  
20 that, briefly about some of the maintenance of that  
21 space. I also want to get into your responsibilities.  
22 First we'll start with maintenance. You had said that  
23 the fuel oil manifold you believe that it was an  
24 inspection, it was towards the end, it was a gasket and  
25 a blank, an inspection -- I'm sorry; I don't recall

1 your exact words. It was like an inspection window?

2 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No window, just it was end  
3 of the pipe and you can use this also for inspection if  
4 you need to check something. I don't know, maybe water  
5 and fuel.

6 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

7 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: But it is called blank  
8 flange or inspection.

9 LTJG [REDACTED]: Inspection.

10 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, something like this.

11 LTJG [REDACTED]: So, since reporting  
12 to the vessel, are you aware if that inspection or  
13 blank flange has been removed to inspect that port?

14 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: There is I think  
15 (unintelligible) or something scheduled. I know that  
16 somebody open this, this side even. Cannot know,  
17 because my (unintelligible) is from 4:00 to 8:00 in the  
18 morning and 4:00 to 8:00 in the evening. The normal  
19 shifts are 8 o'clock to 17 hour, that means only other  
20 day I work with all the crew.

21 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

22 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: That means what are they  
23 doing, I don't know. I just know in the afternoon they  
24 leave me some papers and job to do, and I just follow  
25 this, so I am not working with the crew during day.

1 Sometimes I need to take some overtime if I've got  
2 problem with my machinery, because I cannot do this  
3 during man hours, of course.

4 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

5 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: But I have information  
6 that somebody was removing this flange and type. For  
7 main engine I think responsible, first engine this is  
8 question for him.

9 LTJG [REDACTED]: Does the Chief have  
10 night orders?

11 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Night orders book which we  
12 need to sign, yes.

13 LTJG [REDACTED]: The Chief has them?

14 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, if there is something  
15 to be aware, something to do, supposed to do this.  
16 Sometimes he gave us like orders to sign this book, but  
17 sometimes not also.

18 LTJG [REDACTED]: Were there any  
19 tasking given that night?

20 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: That night I think not  
21 that time, maybe one, two nights before, but that night  
22 not. Especially if you mean this fuel, no. So  
23 something about fuel system. Just do general watch-  
24 keeping and --

25 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. Do you

1 recall what the night orders were two nights ago?

2 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Usually we had to keep  
3 eyes on the (unintelligible) system of these main  
4 engines, that's all, just to keep eyes, because when we  
5 are going from port to port when changing, and we are  
6 changing revolutions, main engines it has affect on  
7 temperature, (unintelligible) and everything, so this  
8 will change viscosity which cause change of pressures,  
9 of pumps, filters and everything. So, (unintelligible)  
10 we need to check engines, the cooling and everything.  
11 But that night when I came, it was everything, because  
12 usually I am also overseeing evening and also in the  
13 morning from one port departure, another port arrival,  
14 so I am doing this.

15 And when I am finishing my duty at 8 o'clock  
16 morning or afternoon, these parameters are already  
17 adjusted and we are after maneuvers on next engine, you  
18 just need to do adjusting. I didn't observe any  
19 abnormal activity that morning.

20 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. Were you  
21 attached to the company when they went to dry dock?  
22 Were you on board?

23 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, I embarked after dry  
24 dock.

25 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. Are you

1 aware of any new systems on that engine specifically a  
2 turbo charger I believe was changed out recently?

3 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I have no information  
4 about this, I just have information they have new  
5 automatic filters for lube oil.

6 LTJG [REDACTED]: Automatic filters  
7 for lube oil?

8 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes.

9 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. What is that  
10 exactly?

11 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: That's filter which has  
12 many (unintelligible), this filter is like strainers  
13 and it's automatically turning and 1/8th of this filter  
14 is also back-flashing, so it is cleaning itself. This  
15 means this (unintelligible) and everything, this motor.

16 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

17 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: That's about fuel system,  
18 exhaust system, or turbo charger, I have no information  
19 about (unintelligible).

20 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay, and just for  
21 clarification as far as maintenance, you are unaware or  
22 since you reported to the vessel, to the best of your  
23 knowledge the inspection plate or the --?

24 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: The blank flange.

25 LTJG [REDACTED]: The blank flange

1 has not been removed?

2 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I didn't see. I wasn't  
3 told never removed this. It has also some silver tape  
4 to prevent this spill, some special, which is made of  
5 aluminum and also this glass fibers, but I think this  
6 spill it already repeat on this tape. So I didn't see  
7 during my time on the board that somebody was  
8 dismantling and inspecting this.

9 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. If you  
10 recall prior to the incident, the condition of that  
11 tape, categories, was it brand new, does it look like  
12 it's been there for a while or was it worn?

13 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: It wasn't look dirty, that  
14 means I think it wasn't very old. I cannot tell this  
15 exactly, maybe somebody clean it, but it wasn't used or  
16 something, it was nice.

17 LTJG [REDACTED]: Good condition,  
18 fairly good condition from which you --?

19 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Average. It wasn't new  
20 and it wasn't like just peeling or something.

21 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. All right,  
22 as far as maintenance I don't have any other  
23 maintenance questions. I'd like to cover what your  
24 assignments are for the Watch Quarter Station Bill,  
25 specifically what are you tasked with for fire-



1 fighting, and then we'll get into abandon ship. So,  
2 we'll start with fire-fighting, what is your  
3 responsibilities?

4 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Well, about fire-fighting,  
5 I am not member, we are Two/Third Engineers on the  
6 vessel. I am not member of this fire (unintelligible)  
7 and other engine names under engineers, so my duties is  
8 just if there is a fire I need to report immediately,  
9 try a fire extinguisher if possible, and it's all just  
10 wait on Master Station after fire and wait for fire  
11 team, and maybe report situation. Another Third  
12 Engineer should be I think -- they were changed now, so  
13 diesel I don't know if this new one also, but the Third  
14 Engineer before us in this fire squad.

15 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

16 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: At th at time, as I said,  
17 it was impossible to do some local fire-fighting with  
18 fire extinguisher because we were unable to go outside  
19 the engine rooms.

20 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay, that's fine.

21 As far as training for operating the CO2 system, is  
22 there anything that you're responsible for?

23 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I am not operating CO2  
24 system. I don't know who was at that time operating  
25 the CO2 system, this was I think Second Safety Officer

1 because he is dividing his duties when we launched the  
2 system that time.

3 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

4 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Maybe Chief Engineer would  
5 be able to provide you more information, because at  
6 that time I was already breathing in oxygen, I didn't  
7 know what happened too much.

8 LTJG [REDACTED]: Not specifically on  
9 this day, but just in general, during your training  
10 have you discussed with Chief or anyone as far as your  
11 responsibility, if they're going to use the CO2, is  
12 there anything special that needs to happen in the  
13 engine space?

14 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, I didn't get any  
15 orders, any information, so I just report the time to  
16 radio that everybody was evacuated because this is  
17 necessary information, because if somebody stay in  
18 Engine Room and they receive O2, they will kill the  
19 persons.

20 LTJG [REDACTED]: Correct. Okay. Do  
21 you know who's responsible for securing the ventilation  
22 and closing the dampeners?

23 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No.

24 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. Do you know  
25 where you could secure ventilation?

1 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Ventilation? No.

2 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

3 PARTICIPANT: Do you understand the  
4 questions?

5 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes.

6 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay, thank you.

7 And the dampeners for the engine space, do you know how  
8 many there are?

9 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: How many? No.

10 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

11 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: At that time I just stop  
12 ventilation which was in the Engine Room, so to prevent  
13 to come in fresh air inside of engine.

14 LTJG [REDACTED]: So, the answers  
15 that you're giving -- the questions that I'm making now  
16 for the ventilation and training, the dampeners, it's  
17 not specific to this day, just in general if you're  
18 aware of the locations of the dampeners?

19 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, dampeners. But I'm  
20 just aware of this closing of fuel system.

21 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. When you  
22 worked for MST Germany, the bulker carrier, did they  
23 have a CO2 system?

24 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, they had CO2 system.

25 LTJG [REDACTED]: So you're familiar

1 with the system and how they operate and --?

2 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Just basically because  
3 this was also this main thing is checking and  
4 releasing, this was the job of Chief Engineer, Second  
5 and Electrician.

6 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay, let me  
7 rephrase the question. So, what I'm asking is if  
8 you're aware that in order for a CO2 system to be  
9 effective, you should try to block in the space so that  
10 the CO2 can stay and do its job?

11 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes.

12 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. So, in this  
13 vessel, you were not provided with training or know  
14 where the dampeners and the ventilation of the engine  
15 space are located. So if they did want to use the CO2,  
16 you're unaware of how to make this space ready for CO2?

17 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No.

18 LTJG [REDACTED]: No that you were  
19 not provided training on the location?

20 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I didn't know where are  
21 this.

22 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

23 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Like locally if it's  
24 remote control, maybe, but local in Engine Room I  
25 didn't know.

1 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay, that's fine.  
2 Okay, so I got maintenance, I covered WQSB. Do you  
3 know where the fuel stops are located outside of the  
4 engine space?

5 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: You mean this closing  
6 valves?

7 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Yes.

8 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: On exit of this Engine  
9 Control Room, here is bigger tank, supply, and there's  
10 supposed to be also this engine, this closing.

11 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Do you know if  
12 those were shut?

13 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I think. I was escaping,  
14 I saw Chief Engineer shutting them.

15 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay.

16 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Motorman, he was going  
17 first, but I saw him stop on this place. So,  
18 (unintelligible), but I saw him on this stop, he was  
19 doing something.

20 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. For the  
21 purpose of the recording I'm just going to describe --  
22 the drawing that you drew for us there is an exit that  
23 you could exit that you don't go into the Engine Room  
24 space, and the quick closing valves for the fuel lines,  
25 you indicated that they're in that exit, so every one

1 that exit with you which was the chief, yourself and  
2 the motorman all pass the fuel stops?

3 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes.

4 LTJG [REDACTED]: Is that accurate?  
5 Okay, perfect. And you saw the Chief in that location,  
6 but you cannot confirm whether he stopped --?

7 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I'm not sure about this,  
8 because I was already poisoned, it was full of these  
9 gases, but I saw him that he stopped for a moment  
10 there.

11 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay, that's fine.  
12 You stated that you fell, possibly unconscious?

13 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I slipped maybe on floor,  
14 I fell, (unintelligible), so I don't remember what was  
15 the --

16 LTJG [REDACTED]: Did you make it on  
17 your own to --?

18 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, to this lower exit.

19 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay, that's Space  
20 B?

21 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I think that's Garage E or  
22 D?

23 LTJG [REDACTED]: Garage E or D?

24 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, if you  
25 (unintelligible), I can show which one, but I don't

1 remember. Both in garage there is also this exit  
2 (unintelligible).

3 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay, and that's  
4 when the fire team was getting ready?

5 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, I saw one fire team.

6 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. So you exit,  
7 you saw your wiper there, and you were able to give the  
8 Safety Officer the information that the Engine Room is  
9 clear?

10 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I just scream on these  
11 people, one of them took me on the site to  
12 (unintelligible) because I was weak to stand, so I  
13 scream on them to, that the Engine Room was fully  
14 evacuated.

15 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay.

16 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: That's when I saw this  
17 wiper.

18 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. Then you  
19 were treated with oxygen?

20 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Later on board when I get  
21 outside on top of the vessel.

22 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. You were  
23 assisted out or did you make it on your own to the top?

24 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, I'm not sure, because  
25 I see engineer, he was helping me on the top, but I

1 think I make it that time, I was strong enough, but  
2 later I started feeling weaker and weaker. I think I  
3 went up (unintelligible).

4 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay, and then  
5 outside that's where you were treated with oxygen?

6 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, I will be helping to  
7 go through these procedures, and then I started feeling  
8 more weaker, so they gave me oxygen.

9 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. What are  
10 your responsibilities for abandon ship?

11 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: For abandon ship I don't  
12 have any special responsibility, just go in Master  
13 Station on the starboard side, and then assisting  
14 responsible person.

15 LTJG [REDACTED]: Master Station  
16 starboard side and just assist with passengers?

17 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, if they need some  
18 assistance, because usually this is carried out by that  
19 department this stuff, I'm not sure.

20 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. I understand  
21 that they were treating you for First Aid. Were you  
22 able to assist in any way or you were just kind of --?

23 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: At first I was helping, as  
24 I said, I was getting this, I imagine suits, life  
25 jackets and something, I was helping passengers. Then



1 when I started feeling weak, I just went on the site,  
2 they gave me oxygen and I was waiting for  
3 disembarkation.

4 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. Are you  
5 assigned to any of the life boats?

6 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I wasn't told on the site.

7 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. Prior to  
8 this event did you receive any training for abandon  
9 ship or fire-fighting with this company?

10 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: With this company we are  
11 training, I think, for fire-fighting (unintelligible)  
12 fire and Engine Room I think our job was to scrape and  
13 report to fire-fighting team, because we don't have any  
14 equipment to go down. Abandon vessel, I think only  
15 with Coast Guard because we have the inspection I think  
16 a week, two weeks ago.

17 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. And during  
18 your abandon ship drill with the Coast Guard, where did  
19 you go?

20 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I just went on this  
21 starboard, Master Station and I reported. I don't know  
22 what his name, he was waiting outside and he had list  
23 of crew, he reported my number was 57.

24 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

25 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: And I was at that time in

1 duty, so I needed to return to Engine Room and continue  
2 watch-keeping because it was (unintelligible).

3 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. How did you  
4 disembark on this day, the vessel?

5 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: On the sliding thing.

6 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Sliding?

7 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, I got this like  
8 everybody.

9 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay.

10 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Then they took us on this  
11 Coast Guard vessel, then they moved us to another  
12 vessel. Then another faster vessel, and then they  
13 disembark us, two or three-week (unintelligible), these  
14 cruise ships.

15 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. Do you know  
16 if you were on the first raft or -- I'm sorry; were  
17 there a lot of people going --?

18 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I was not on the raft.  
19 They just moved me directly to this Coast Guard, some  
20 rescue vessel.

21 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Oh, okay. So you  
22 slid down?

23 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, and there is a  
24 platform.

25 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: From the platform

1 you went to a Coast Guard vessel?

2 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, Coast Guard.

3 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. Right now I  
4 am done with my questioning. Two more questions, I'll  
5 ask them at the end. What I'm going to do is I'm going  
6 to open this up to everyone else that's here for  
7 follow-up, if they have any other follow-up questions.  
8 Again, thank you for all this information that you've  
9 given us.

10 CDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Good afternoon, this  
11 is Commander [REDACTED]. I have just couple questions;  
12 accountability at muster, who's in charge in making  
13 sure everybody is there?

14 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: On Master Station we are  
15 supposed to go. I don't know his name, this person is  
16 now waiting (unintelligible). I just know which one is  
17 on the face. I know that I need to report to him.

18 CDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Do you have any idea  
19 how long it actually took to evacuate the vessel? How  
20 many people?

21 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No.

22 CDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: No?

23 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I don't know the time. I  
24 was already on oxygen sitting on the floor, so I don't  
25 know.

1 CDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Did anything appear  
2 unusual about the muster in the evacuation?

3 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Like what kind of unusual  
4 do you mean?

5 CDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: You go through  
6 training. Do you think that it followed how you were  
7 trained or did you have to change your training, change  
8 your procedures?

9 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I don't know if it was  
10 captain's order or they choose the starboard side for  
11 evacuation. That first day evacuated (unintelligible)  
12 and then crew and then (unintelligible). I just  
13 considered this sliding, how to say, platform was not  
14 (unintelligible). I did not observe anything, I was  
15 already a little bit out of mind from poisoning.

16 CDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: So, are you aware of  
17 any problems that may have been encountered during the  
18 emergency?

19 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I was not informed about  
20 any problems, I was just waiting until passenger's crew  
21 evacuated also.

22 CDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: From what you  
23 witnessed do you have any recommendations that may be  
24 used to either make fire-fighting or evacuation any  
25 better?

1 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: If I could do this better?

2 CDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Not just you,  
3 anything. If you can think of anything, like, "Man, I  
4 wish we could have done this?"

5 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, like I wish I knew  
6 about this gasket 15 minutes earlier, so I will stop  
7 engine. During this time, as I said it was a matter of  
8 few seconds, we had no time to discuss, "Okay, we will  
9 do this first, this and that." No, just reaction,  
10 reacting on the situation immediately. So, I think, so  
11 I know nobody died, nobody was injured too much.

12 CDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Yes, congratulations.

13 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I think the people did  
14 what they're supposed to do.

15 CDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Yes, congratulations.

16 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I was one of the persons  
17 who was injured the most, so the others were okay.  
18 That's good for me.

19 CDR [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Thank you very much  
20 for your time. I don't have any more questions.

21 JIM GALLETTE: This is Jim Gallette with the  
22 National Center of Expertise. I just have a question  
23 that has to do with the diesel, you had talked about  
24 (unintelligible) before watch, maybe shifting over  
25 fuel. Can you re-explain what that is, what was done?

1 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: When the changing, just  
2 the need to open and start opening and closing oil from  
3 diesel (unintelligible) and closing from heavy fuel  
4 (unintelligible), slowly observing viscosity, how is it  
5 changing, because the heavy fuel is still hot. So,  
6 they are just all re-opening and closing this two wells  
7 and slowly changing until the vessel enter, that only  
8 has to be changed.

9 JIM GALLETTE: When did you say it had to be  
10 changed?

11 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Before the vessel enters  
12 this second area where the diesel is the master.

13 JIM GALLETTE: Okay. So is it always  
14 (unintelligible) before watch?

15 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, because this vessel  
16 was on the line between Dominican Republic and Puerto  
17 Rico, the arrival and departure was same time. So,  
18 (unintelligible) few minutes maybe, it was the same

19 JIM GALLETTE: Do you do that on both sides?  
20 Do you do it going into the Dominican Republic as well  
21 as the United States?

22 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, because when we leave  
23 Puerto Rico, before Dominican, we are able to reach the  
24 position of area, of course we'd like to change to  
25 heavy fuel.

1           JIM GALLETTE: Okay. And you said that is  
2 generally the Second Officer that is on that watch on  
3 12:00 to 4:00?

4           PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, he is on this watch  
5 between 12:00 to 4:00.

6           JIM GALLETTE: You're personally, are you  
7 trained to do that?

8           PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I know which, I've never  
9 done this on this vessel, but I know which wells to  
10 operate.

11           JIM GALLETTE: All right. Also, going out  
12 in the space, you talked about possibly the Chief  
13 securing some fuel valves on their exit out?

14           PAVOL SLADKOVIC: This --

15           JIM GALLETTE: You may have seen him.

16           PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I saw him stop on this  
17 station. You have to address to him, but I saw him  
18 stop on this station because there are these three  
19 closing valves.

20           JIM GALLETTE: Is there ventilation, on/off  
21 switches there as well, or just the fuel valves?

22           PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, I think there are only  
23 fuels that time.

24           JIM GALLETTE: All right, thank you.

25           PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes.

1           ADAM TUCKER: Pavol, thank you again for  
2 talking with us. I'm with the National Transportation  
3 Safety Board, so we do a different investigation than  
4 the Coast Guard, but we work of course together. So,  
5 on the back-end we determine what the cause of the fire  
6 was and we make recommendations to improve safety and  
7 that could be at any level at either IMO or Coast  
8 Guard, company level flag, anything like that.

9           I have a couple follow-up questions. Number  
10 one, I just wanted to say we're happy you're alive and  
11 it sounds to me like this was down to seconds and it  
12 could have been a way worse situation. And thank you  
13 for your actions as well. I understand you worked the  
14 security engines and everything like that, so that was  
15 good.

16           One of the follow-on questions I have is  
17 does the ECR, does that Engine Room, do you have any  
18 type of automation system?

19           PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Automation, what kind of  
20 machinery you want to know?

21           ADAM TUCKER: If you just have like a  
22 universal, in the greater automation system, any type  
23 of computer that you can control machinery from the ECR  
24 or is it all manual valve?

25           PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Everything is manual.



1 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

2 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: We have there two  
3 computers, but only for indication of this  
4 temperatures, pressures not working, parameters.

5 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

6 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: We have some, one of them  
7 was new for this starboard stabilizer, but this was  
8 operated from bridge. We just confirm that it's open  
9 or closed.

10 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. And that computer that  
11 you get for indication, does it have any prints or  
12 anything like that?

13 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: It doesn't print anything.  
14 This is 27-year-old stuff, no.

15 ADAM TUCKER: This kind of leads into my  
16 next question, so do you have any type of -- I  
17 understand that during a normal watch that you can be  
18 in the ECR and then you can be in the Engine Room  
19 itself and kind of back and forth. So, do you have any  
20 alarms?

21 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes.

22 ADAM TUCKER: Can you explain just in  
23 general, are they lights, are they sounds, what kind of  
24 alarms do you typically get?

25 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: We have alarms sound and

1 light, also. As I said, we have two computers for this  
2 indication, if any of them appears it will sound the  
3 alarm. So I need to call to Engine Room, check alarm  
4 and fix what's going on.

5 ADAM TUCKER: So if you were working in the  
6 Engine Room and you heard an alarm, then you would go  
7 to the ECR to check to see where the alarm is?

8 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Usually when I am doing  
9 this, when I am going somewhere or round check or  
10 somewhere outside, I will always keep one motorman  
11 inside the Engine Room for quick response.

12 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

13 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Even if I, for example,  
14 work on some machinery, I will call one motorman. If  
15 there is a problem, he will call me and I will start  
16 going up and we'll do it this way. Our Engine Control  
17 Room I never leave alone.

18 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. So, what kind of alarms  
19 would you get -- I'm not saying for this day, but what  
20 are some of the alarms that you would normally get?

21 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Normally we get alarms  
22 when starting/stopping generators, that means it's  
23 pressure of fuel/oil, (unintelligible) service tanks,  
24 all level alarms. Sometimes (unintelligible) alarms  
25 when they are cleaning something big and they made a

1 lot of (unintelligible), which is also main engine, for  
2 example, compressed air alarm. We are starting, it  
3 will be longer, so the pressure of air drops down.  
4 Sometimes a purifier alarm, but this one is common  
5 alarm usually what's going on, checking on purifier  
6 screen. That's, I think, all.

7 ADAM TUCKER: Now to your watch, before you  
8 discovered the leak or the leak was reported to you,  
9 were there any alarms during your watch?

10 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, I don't remember. I  
11 remember only one alarm that's fuel viscosity alarm,  
12 because this is still from all system, we have all new  
13 system to control the viscosity, because I think they  
14 disconnected this one. So it generally appears and  
15 it's acknowledged, but it has nothing to do. There is  
16 no machinery, equipment connected to the system, just  
17 there, because we have already there is some system to  
18 control viscosity, to control eating of fuel.

19 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

20 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: This is, I think, all what  
21 I did during that night. I'm not sure about maybe  
22 purified, but sometimes during this chart of purified  
23 we get pressure alarm and this.

24 ADAM TUCKER: Maybe high pressure?

25 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, on lube oil this is

1 happening when the bowl opens, when the purifier  
2 discharge, I think we need to fix a problem of pressure  
3 sensor. We have seven engineer on this, I think. But  
4 being in accordance with this main engine and even  
5 fuel, I think this gap and this gasket wasn't too big  
6 to drag the pressure of the fuel, so we didn't get any  
7 alarm there.

8 ADAM TUCKER: You answered my next question,  
9 thank you. So there were no alarms to indicate any  
10 fuel pressure drop or anything?

11 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, this gap wasn't so big  
12 to do indication.

13 ADAM TUCKER: So, your only alarm was the  
14 motorman coming to tell you that there is a problem?

15 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: If there is, if I need to  
16 go outside, I always tell one motorman or somebody,  
17 other one, if there is Chief, other engineer, I'll ask  
18 him I need to go outside for a few minutes, please keep  
19 eyes on alarms.

20 ADAM TUCKER: Okay, but for this day for the  
21 accident, the motorman was the one that told you up to  
22 spray, right?

23 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, he told me about  
24 this.

25 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. Do you know the type of

1 engine?

2 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: It's a Mitsubishi, 8  
3 cylinders, 4 stroke, around 12,000 kilowatts. Direct  
4 type of engine he will tell you maybe Chief Engineer or  
5 Second.

6 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. And I know this was  
7 asked before, but just during your six-week onboard,  
8 first question, any problems with that engine?

9 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Some difficult problems.  
10 They were changing some parts, I think, bearings also  
11 in a (unintelligible), but we didn't have any luck,  
12 some bigger problems which needed us to stop the vessel  
13 and something like this. And as I said, from my point  
14 of view, the biggest weakness of this fuel system was  
15 on the same site as the (unintelligible) system. These  
16 leakages are happening, this already had fuel, but  
17 always the fuel system was on the site where there is  
18 only this (unintelligible), so no high temperature.  
19 This made this engine most danger of this thing.

20 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. Your normal EGT  
21 temperatures for that engine, your exhaust gas?

22 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Exhaust gas temperatures  
23 depends on all this, maybe 300, 4400 degrees before  
24 turbo charger and the 450.

25 ADAM TUCKER: 450 for that load, for that

1 evening?

2 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, I did have log books,  
3 I already wrote that.

4 ADAM TUCKER: The Chief Engineer has a log  
5 book?

6 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes.

7 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. All right. I used to  
8 work on cruise ships as well. A lot of the times on  
9 cruise vessels, passenger vessels we have other duties  
10 except for just the normal watch-keeping duties. Do  
11 you have any secondary duties, like any maintenance?  
12 Are you responsible for boilers, (unintelligible),  
13 evaporators?

14 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I got my machinery which  
15 I'm responsible for.

16 ADAM TUCKER: What kind of machinery do you  
17 do?

18 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I'm responsible for all  
19 the purifiers, all the fuel, purifiers. Then this, how  
20 to say, auxiliary equipment, transfer (unintelligible)  
21 CPP and (unintelligible) which are just circulating  
22 lube oil. I don't, remaining anything. I'm supposed  
23 to assist to First Engine, also on the life-saving  
24 equipment. We have this standing order, so the most  
25 important, boiler and such stuff, also another Third

1 Engine.

2 ADAM TUCKER: And so with this equipment  
3 were there any problems with any of this equipment that  
4 you mentioned is under your area of responsibility?

5 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Purifiers. They was 27  
6 years old, they was really old, it took me around two  
7 weeks to fix everything. I needed to do general  
8 maintenance, because I think before me Engine Room  
9 didn't care too much about this device, so need to do  
10 the inspection, cleaning and change O-rings,  
11 everything, just parameters. And remaining, maybe some  
12 general, maybe small leakage, in two weeks I'll  
13 schedule something like this. I replace fuel,  
14 (unintelligible) on the fuel transfer pumps, booster  
15 pumps and clear indication.

16 ADAM TUCKER: To clarify, the purifier you  
17 referenced as the one that kind of gave you some  
18 trouble, is that fuel oil or lube oil?

19 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Well, we have two lube oil  
20 purifiers. One was already inspected by this  
21 technician one week ago, one was working okay and one  
22 problem was all the diesel and one was the fuel  
23 purifier. It take me around 1-1/2, two weeks, I fix  
24 it, but now it was working properly last one, two weeks  
25 ago. I already finished it and started working without

1 any problems.

2 ADAM TUCKER: So, after your repair, it was  
3 working well?

4 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, we just needed to  
5 observe this. Because as I said, 27 years old it has  
6 no sensors, nothing like control display so you can see  
7 what's going on with this one. So we needed to observe  
8 (unintelligible), there is no discharge, so I think  
9 this is normal for such separator because you don't  
10 have any indication. At that time it was working  
11 properly.

12 ADAM TUCKER: Okay, thank you. And with  
13 that, in order to do all this maintenance, you use some  
14 kind of planned maintenance system, some sort of  
15 computer system that tells you what jobs you have to do  
16 or your running hours, the task for running hours?

17 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: We didn't have anything  
18 like this, like some of this machinery they have this  
19 hour counters, so it's much easier. Also, for example,  
20 from this purifiers I always check instruction manual  
21 and then I knew every four times an hour I need to  
22 replace oil every 12,000, I need to do major  
23 maintenance, so I just check display and compare, and  
24 this is how I was doing the maintenance.

25 ADAM TUCKER: Let me make sure I understood.



1 So, check the counters and then you do the maintenance  
2 based on the counter reading?

3 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes.

4 ADAM TUCKER: So when that's done, do you do  
5 a paper to say I did this job (unintelligible)?

6 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, already Chief  
7 Engineer puts one, maybe sheet where we writing every  
8 day what we did, our daily duties, then company gave us  
9 something new, everything was separated for every  
10 engine, so we started writing this one.

11 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. So it was all writing  
12 stuff, no computers or nothing?

13 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, but now we started  
14 writing this in Microsoft Excel. Before we were just  
15 writing everything on log sheet.

16 ADAM TUCKER: And when you did that with the  
17 Excel, you sent to Chief Engineer, he send to maybe the  
18 company or?

19 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I think Chief Engineer  
20 forwarded it to company management. We were just  
21 filling in at the end of the week, but we starting this  
22 only now maybe two weeks ago.

23 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. And you mentioned as  
24 well one of your other duties is helping the First  
25 Engineer with life-saving, with the life-boat engines

1 and help with that?

2 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I've never been asked to  
3 help. He never asked me, so.

4 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. I'm getting that. Good  
5 picture, thank you very much, because that made things  
6 very clear for me as well. Besides the actions that  
7 you took to shut down the port engine, did you operate  
8 any other valves or did you push any other buttons  
9 before you left?

10 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, there was no  
11 (unintelligible), shut the engine, shut the fuel.

12 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

13 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: That was the most  
14 important to prevent another spilling of this fuel from  
15 the manifold, it was most important.

16 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. Was that only for the  
17 port engine and the starboard engine was still running?

18 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Both. Yes, because if I  
19 stop only one engine (unintelligible) excessive load  
20 and it can blow the turbo chargers.

21 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

22 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: In this situation I stop  
23 the vessel and finish.

24 ADAM TUCKER: The ECR you had control of the  
25 engines, not the bridge?

1 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: At that time we were  
2 preparing on maneuvers, here we had control. I didn't  
3 change the control, because I can change it anytime. I  
4 can only just bridge some. I wasn't sure if I -- I  
5 think we had control that time on the engine. If not,  
6 of course, I go change it immediately to stop engine.

7 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. And you mentioned the  
8 boost pumps and the feed, and you secured the boost and  
9 feed --

10 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No just boost and feed.

11 ADAM TUCKER: You put a stop, and that was  
12 for both engines?

13 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes, they have a central  
14 fuel system.

15 ADAM TUCKER: Okay, so if you stop one, you  
16 stop them all?

17 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes.

18 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. And during that time,  
19 because you stopped those, I understand that the  
20 generators are in another compartment. Did they stay  
21 working or when you stopped that, did it stop those?

22 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I think they will stay  
23 working because they were (unintelligible) and this  
24 generators were unable to stop remote. If I wanted to  
25 stop, I need to go through the fire.

1 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

2 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: And if I do this, even if  
3 I (unintelligible) to do this, I will not be sure if I  
4 do this because I will put Engine Room in the dark and  
5 we are missing one wiper. It takes around I think 45  
6 seconds (unintelligible) emergency generator, so maybe  
7 I will kill this (unintelligible) because engine will  
8 be dark for 40 seconds. But as I said, it was  
9 impossible to pass through that fire to  
10 (unintelligible).

11 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. And with that, staying  
12 with that, did you ever notice at any time with the  
13 lights flickering or any change of light?

14 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: During -- no, it took only  
15 few minutes until he left outside. No, I didn't see  
16 anything. Even if he told there's three generators  
17 were running, so there was enough power this, because  
18 the generators were prepared for starting both  
19 thrusters, so there was enough power that they were  
20 running only 20-30 percent of performance. You can low  
21 on fuel, but still enough to continue feeding power to  
22 the system.

23 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. Does the ETG, can you  
24 start from the ECR or does it start remotely?

25 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: It starts automatically

1 when there is no power from generators.

2 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

3 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: When I was outside or when  
4 I was moved outside, I heard that it's running.

5 ADAM TUCKER: And where is the ETG? That's  
6 a curiosity question because I haven't bene on board  
7 yet.

8 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: It's outside, it's near  
9 between the (unintelligible). There is one on the  
10 outside on the top of the (unintelligible).

11 ADAM TUCKER: And you heard it running?

12 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I did, it was generator.

13 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. And you mentioned you  
14 spoke with the bridge; when you initially told the  
15 bridge that there was a fire, did you use a radio or  
16 did you use telephone?

17 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, I used telephone  
18 because at that time when I stopped the main engine, I  
19 already took telephone. It was like this communication  
20 tower which was closest to me, I immediately take the  
21 phone and started calling them.

22 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

23 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: There is fire in Engine  
24 Room, the port side engine is burning. At that time  
25 even I had called (unintelligible) to push the button

1 on this fuel.

2 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

3 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: This was closer, because  
4 if I go somewhere outside to push some fire alarm, I  
5 will just put everybody (unintelligible), but nobody  
6 will know what's happen, so I just do the phone so they  
7 have information what's happening.

8 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

9 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: So this one my decision to  
10 do a first thing for what's happening.

11 ADAM TUCKER: You mentioned as well you did  
12 use a radio to talk to the bridge?

13 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Chief Engineer, it was his  
14 radio.

15 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. Inside the Engine Room,  
16 there's water-tight doors?

17 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes.

18 ADAM TUCKER: Are they manual closing or can  
19 you close remotely?

20 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: You can close them  
21 manually, you got to know the place for the one side  
22 and the other side, there's some levers so that you're  
23 closing there is no pressure. Also you can manually  
24 operate the pump, and then they can close the remote  
25 from the bridge and I think one of the fire stations

1 this is operating by this fire rescue team. At that  
2 time we scraped and I'm not sure, I think they closed  
3 them from the bridge.

4 ADAM TUCKER: So they were in normal  
5 operation at sea that these water-tight doors are open?

6 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: On sea, no. I know in  
7 this garage, in lower garage they're normally closed.  
8 In Engine Room between generators and down between CPP  
9 they were open because we are frequently going there,  
10 working there.

11 ADAM TUCKER: Do you know of -- it didn't  
12 look like it was in your duties or responsibilities,  
13 but do you know or have you ever witnessed anybody  
14 checking for hot spots in the engines, either from  
15 thermographic camera, anything?

16 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: We were checking the  
17 temperatures on generator (unintelligible). I mean,  
18 this, and on the main engines, on every cylinder we  
19 have temperature of jacket cooling motor, exhaust gas  
20 temperature, we have temperature of full boil inside  
21 bearings, and outside also the coolers, so we got  
22 enough information.

23 ADAM TUCKER: Okay, I was thinking more of  
24 the surface temperatures of the engine. Did anybody  
25 check to see if there were any hot spots and maybe

1 lagging down or any extra --?

2 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, I don't know about  
3 this.

4 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. I'm almost done. You  
5 mentioned fuel change-overs, and I understand that it's  
6 a process to change between heavy fuel oil to diesel  
7 oil and back and forth. Is there a checklist, any type  
8 of printed form that you do or follow?

9 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I think instructions where  
10 we turn on small cards in engine room, it's process,  
11 how to do it for motormen, so they don't know how to do  
12 it slowly. And every time this happens, records are  
13 put in log book, time and position of vessel, and it  
14 was changed.

15 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. And you shared your  
16 opinion, and I'll take it as that, but can you explain  
17 to me again why that -- you mentioned the viscosity and  
18 the temperatures, what kind of effect does that have  
19 when you change from heavy fuel to diesel?

20 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: This is maybe question fro  
21 manufacturer of engine, because he has return viscosity  
22 of engine, which fuel has to (unintelligible), because  
23 low viscosity fuel pump you start leaking, they can  
24 cause some problems. So our job is just keep this fuel  
25 in this engine viscosity, when we are going from heavy



1 fuel to diesel, all installation it has around 80  
2 degrees, if you put in such installation diesel just  
3 directly, it will fall down the viscosity, maybe  
4 (unintelligible) and this is very low for the engine.  
5 Our job is slowly opening diesel and closing every  
6 fuel, checking when the fuel system is slowly cooling  
7 down and duty is to keep the viscosity in the range of  
8 manufacturer's recommendation for the engine.

9 ADAM TUCKER: And the range for that  
10 manufacturer, do you remember?

11 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Maybe you should ask First  
12 Engine, he's more familiarized with the system.

13 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. So now you announced to  
14 the bridge that this has happened, can you tell me if  
15 you remember any codes announced over the PA or any  
16 announcements over the speakers or any type of alarms  
17 that you heard, anything that you remember at all?

18 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I don't remember if the  
19 general sound alarm, because I think they sound general  
20 alarm only after it was impossible to stop the fire,  
21 even passengers know this.

22 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

23 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: This I don't remember,  
24 because would this happen too fast, I'm not sure about  
25 this. I just knew that when we left, within few

1 minutes this fire team was already preparing for fire-  
2 fighting, so.

3 ADAM TUCKER: Okay. Did you hear an  
4 announcement from Mr. (unintelligible)?

5 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I don't remember.

6 ADAM TUCKER: And back to -- one more, two  
7 more questions. We talked bout the water mist system -  
8 - I apologize, three questions. You mentioned that you  
9 saw Chief Engineer activating, but I understand that  
10 you didn't see any water, too much smoke and everything  
11 like that.

12 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes.

13 ADAM TUCKER: Do you recall hearing any  
14 pumps or anything at all that would indicate the water  
15 mist system was working?

16 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: It's not possible with  
17 three generators running, you cannot hear anything if  
18 these generators are running.

19 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

20 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Even this explosion, it  
21 was all off, it was only here because there's a lot of  
22 noise.

23 ADAM TUCKER: I know you were busy, I know  
24 the answer, but it's a standard question I ask  
25 everyone. In this day and age everyone's got their

1 phones and everyone takes pictures. Did you have your  
2 phone? Did you take any pictures?

3 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Everything I took from the  
4 vessel is keep from my cabinet.

5 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

6 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I hope soon I will be able  
7 to take, everything, my camera, electronics locked up,  
8 everything stayed there, my clothes, everything.

9 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

10 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: They just moved me  
11 outside, and when I went to hospital I was still  
12 wearing my dirty overall and I didn't do anything.

13 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

14 JONATHAN DUNLEAVY: I don't think he  
15 understood your question, that he thinks did you take  
16 the phone with him when he left?

17 ADAM TUCKER: Yes, but you answered my  
18 question because you never had your phone with you,  
19 right?

20 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, I still didn't have  
21 it.

22 ADAM TUCKER: All right. That is -- okay,  
23 the last question; if Chief Engineer wasn't there to  
24 activate the water mist, do you have the approval to do  
25 so?

1 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes.

2 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

3 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: And there are also, as I  
4 said, how to improve, how to start a system and  
5 (unintelligible).

6 ADAM TUCKER: Okay.

7 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I like never done it on  
8 the real, but I know how to.

9 ADAM TUCKER: Do you know of the water mist  
10 system, the type, the manufacturer?

11 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, I wasn't taking, the  
12 main thing is about the systems. It will, the Chief  
13 Engineer if you ask him, I'm sure of this.

14 ADAM TUCKER: Okay, that is all the  
15 questions I have. I'm sorry for asking so much.

16 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: That's okay.

17 ADAM TUCKER: Yes, once again, thank you and  
18 we're happy (unintelligible).

19 PARTICIPANT: Then I have one more question,  
20 I'll be quick. Was the Staff Captain did he ever go  
21 down to the Engine Room before you guys evacuated?

22 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: He was in Engine Room when  
23 we were escaping. Then because I was already inside  
24 oxygen mask.

25 PARTICIPANT: Okay, thank you.

1 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Anybody else have  
2 any follow-up?

3 Thank you for that. It's been almost two  
4 hours in here. I have two more follow-on questions and  
5 then we are done.

6 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I'll share as much I can.

7 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay, thank you for  
8 your time. Thank you for doing this. I just want to  
9 clarify that the only abandon ship drill that you have  
10 done is with the Coast Guard since reporting on this  
11 vessel?

12 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Since I think we had one -  
13 - I'm not sure if we had one fire drill during passage  
14 from Spain to U.S., but I was just fresh embark. I'm  
15 not sure about this because even I stayed watch-  
16 keeping, it was not possible when vessel is running  
17 that everybody will go outside. I'm not sure. My  
18 captain will have (unintelligible) about this, so.

19 LTJG [REDACTED] [REDACTED]: Okay. And the last  
20 is more is there anything that you would like to add  
21 that we maybe failed to ask, anything that you want to  
22 tell us about the event, anything at all?

23 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No, I don't know. As I  
24 said, from my point of view, the biggest problem with  
25 this engine, that this fuel system was installed on

1 exhaust side. So if this different, this was first  
2 time I had this type of installation that it was like  
3 this. I remember no other vessel with this type of  
4 engine.

5 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay.

6 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: I don't know what else I  
7 should say.

8 LTJG [REDACTED]: I don't have any  
9 other questions for you. Again, thank you for your  
10 time. I'd like to open it up to you if you have any  
11 questions for us, or for me.

12 Also, before you leave, your drawing that  
13 you have here is in pencil, if you can identify where  
14 the bow would be and then some of the systems with my  
15 blue pen, and then just write your name somewhere on  
16 the side.

17 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Yes.

18 LTJG [REDACTED]: Thank you. Do you  
19 have any questions for me or anyone?

20 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: No.

21 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay. The time is  
22 3:09, I'm going to call the conclusion of the matter  
23 under investigation which was the fire of the Carribean  
24 Fantasy, and this was the interview of Pavol Sladkovic.

25 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Sladkovic.

1 LTJG [REDACTED]: Okay, thank you.

2 PAVOL SLADKOVIC: Okay.

3 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went  
4 off the record at 3:09 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

MATTER: Fire Onboard the Caribbean Fantasy  
August 17, 2016  
Accident No. DCA16FM052  
Interview of Pavol Sladkovic

DATE: 08-20-16

I hereby certify that the attached transcription of page 1 to 80 inclusive are to the best of my professional ability a true, accurate, and complete record of the above referenced proceedings as contained on the provided audio recording; further that I am neither counsel for, nor related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this action in which this proceeding has taken place; and further that I am not financially nor otherwise interested in the outcome of the action.

*Neal R Gross*  
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**NEAL R. GROSS**

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